



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101

March 31, 2008

Reply To  
Attn. of: ETPA-088

Ref: 01-056-BLM

Mr. John Sullivan, NCA Manager  
Bureau of Land Management - Four Rivers Field Office  
3948 Development Avenue  
Boise, Idaho 83705

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the **Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP) and Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area (NCA)** pursuant to our responsibilities under the NEPA and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

On August 30, 2006, EPA provided written comments to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). EPA rated the DEIS and the Preferred Alternative, Alternative D, as Environmental Concerns - Adequate (EC-1). This rating was based on our concerns that raptor conservation, protection, and enhancement could be in conflict with recreation, military training, and livestock grazing activities in the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area. We recommended that BLM select Alternative C for implementation because it would provide the most environmentally protective management measures for the NCA.

The FEIS indicates that Alternative D is the proposed NCA Resource Management Plan (Preferred Alternative). The response to our comments in the FEIS explains that Alternative C may have the greatest social and economic impact due to the loss of livestock grazing and limitations on the Idaho Army National Guard (IDARNG). EPA supports the goals and objectives of the RMP. We understand the trade-offs that are made in situations like these, and while we remain concerned about potential adverse environmental impacts associated with grazing, we have no objections to the project. We recommend that the rationale for not selecting Alternative C as the proposed NCA RMP be discussed in the Record of Decision (ROD).

We appreciate the opportunity to review the FEIS. If you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Jen of my staff at (907) 271-3411.

Sincerely,

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Christine B. Reichgott, Manager  
NEPA Review Unit